

RATIONALE / INTENT:

At our Centre we believe that the wellbeing and safety of the children within our care is paramount to their holistic development.

GUIDELINES:

Should Head lice be suspected on a person at Learning Curves:

- If this is a child, take them to a private area to maintain their dignity, and look closer for signs, especially behind the ears, and nape of the neck. Once confirmed;
- Tie the persons hair up securely, preferably in a bun.
- Notify the parents immediately so they can purchase treatments products. Parents are not required to collect their child immediately.
- The infected person must then stay away from the centre until treatment has begun. However, we are not able to exclude children or adults on the basis of having head lice -MoH Guidelines.
- All staff will be notified immediately, and the attached letter will be sent home to ALL families.
- The privacy of the child or adult will be maintained.
- All hats will be washed on a hot wash cycle and be washed at least once a week.
- The child's bedding will be hot washed, and tumbled dried separately from other items.
- The infected person will be required to bring in a hat from home until the lice have been eradicated.
- Staff will be vigilant about monitoring the infection, and informing management and staff. They are not required to treat the child's hair.

If Head lice is found on a child at home:

- The child should be kept at home until at least ONE treatment has been administered. Children will not be excluded if treatment is underway.
- The parents must inform a staff member if their child has lice.
- The child's hair will be tied up when they arrive, and staff will make sure it remains tied up.
- The child will bring in a hat from home for the duration of infection.
- Parents will be vigilant about checking their child's hair regularly.

Dear Parents / Caregivers

Head lice have been found amongst children at Learning Curves. These insects are a nuisance and can be controlled or eradicated by families. Head lice crawl from head to head and may be passed on through shared objects such as hairbrushes and hats. It is recommended that you check all members of your household carefully. Anyone can host head lice. Cleanliness is not a factor in whether head lice are present or not.

What to look for

- Small light or dark brown insects without wings.
- Tiny whitish eggs (nits) like grains of salt attached to hair shafts.
- There may be unusual itching on the head or neck.
- Small red marks on the neck or behind the ears (headlice bites).

What to do

- Check all members of the household daily at the same time for at least three weeks.
- Treat anyone who is hosting head lice. Effective treatment need not be chemical or expensive.
- Please advise the centre if you find head lice and confirm that treatment has begun.
- Be prepared to continue treatment for about three weeks depending on the method chosen. Three weeks is the length of the head louse breeding cycle; you need to break the cycle or infestation will continue.
- After each treatment, comb the hair with a fine toothed comb.
- Extra precautions may include washing all bed linen, pillowcases and towels in hot water and tumble drying for 20 minutes on high. Other items that have come in contact with heads should also be thoroughly cleaned.
- Soak hairbrushes and combs in hot water for at least ten minutes.
- Vacuuming carpets and rugs may be helpful.
- Repeat treatment 7 to 10 days after initial treatment.
- Please ensure that all long hair is tied up securely.

Treating the hair is no guarantee that the problem has been eradicated. Success is more likely if treatment is thorough, checking daily for at least three weeks and children are reminded to avoid head to head contact with others.

What not to do

- **Do not** use shampoo, conditioner or a hair drier on hair within 24 hours of using a chemical treatment. Each of these can make the treatment less effective or cause it to fail.
- **Do not** use ordinary insecticides, pet shampoo or flammable petroleum products.
- **Do not** use chemical products if the person applying the treatment or the person being treated is pregnant.

More information can be found at www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/diseases-and-illnesses/head-lice

Thank you for your co-operation. Please contact the centre for further information.

Centre Manager